U. K. Government's refusal to provide assistance for Rihand-II Power Project

*114. SHRI SUKOMAL SEN :
SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of United Kingdom have refused to provide assistance for the Rihand II Power Project;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to handle the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI KALP NATH RAI) : (a) and (b) The Government of United Kingdom have expressed their inability to provide assistance for Rihand II Power project to be implemented by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) because of their own financial constraints.

(c) Alternative sources of funding needed to be explored.

Aid sought from Asian Development Bank

*115. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA :
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that during his recent visit to Washington he urged the President of the Asian Development Bank to provide aid of $ 250 to $ 300 million a year over the next three years towards India's medium term balance of payment plan;

(b) if so, what was the response of ADB thereto; and

(c) what are the details of the medium term balance of payment plan ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) to (c) During the recent visit to Washington in connection with annual meeting of the World Bank and IMF in September, 1992, the Finance Minister met the President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and reviewed ADB's assistance to India. During the course of these and earlier discussions, the ADB indicated their willingness to consider a commitment of US $ 250 million to US $ 300 million a year by way of fast disbursing sector loans designed to assist our medium term balance of payments management.

Gift from U.S.A. under PL 480 Scheme

@*116. SHRI S. MADHAVAN : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Government have received Soyabeen oil as gift from the U.S.A. under the PL 480 scheme; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) and (b) Approximately 47,000 M.T.s of Crude Degummed Soyabean Oil worth $ 25 million gifted by Government of U.S.A. under US PL 480, Title III Programme has been received during the months of August-September, 1992. The soyabean oil has been received partly at Bombay Port and partly at Kandla Port by the State Trading Corporation of India, which is the consignee of this commodity under the agreement signed between Governments of USA and India on 28-5-1992. Out of the sale proceeds of the commodity 70% will be given to National Renewal Fund and 30% for financing agro-industries development.

Visit of World Bank President to India

*117. SHRI N. E. BALARAM :
SHRIMATI SARALA MAHESHWARI :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank President Mr. Lewis Preston visited the country recently; and

@Previously Starred Question 76, transferred from the 27th November, 1992

(b) if so, what are the details of the discussions held with him regarding the disbursement of loans ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) : (a) and (b) Mr. Lewis T. Preston, President of the World Bank, visited India from November 10 to 15, 1992. During his visit, discussions were held with him on matters pertaining to the World Bank's portfolio of projects in India, and on the prospects of continued and increased support from the World Bank in view of the general appreciation of the progress achieved by India in restoring macro-economic stabilisation. Mr. Preston was advised regarding the steps taken recently to speed up the pace of disbursement of loans, including a decision to transfer 100% of external assistance to implementing State Governments, provision of advances, intensification of monitoring of projects, etc.

Suggestions made by Social Audit Panel on telecom & postal services

*118. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE :

SHRI P. UPENDRA :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Social Audit Panel on telecom and postal services, appointed by his Ministry has suggested radical changes in the telecom billing practices in the country on a priority basis; and

(b) if so, what steps Governments are taking to implement the suggestions made by the panel ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) and (b) In its Second Action Report, submitted in October, 92 the Social Audit Panel has recommended some changes in billing practices. The recommendations are under the consideration of the department.

Introduction of radio telephone connections

*119. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received by Government to introduce radio telephone connections in India for the general public;

(b) whether Government have accepted the proposal on nation-wide basis; and

(c) what is the number of car telephones available in India on every city level and what are the new connections to be released during 1992-93 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT) : (a) In response to tender invited by the Department of Telecommunications for franchising the operation of Cellular Mobile Telephone service in the four metro cities of Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and Madras, 30 bids were received. 14 bidders were short listed and financial tenders issued to them. After financial evaluation 8 bidders, 2 per city, were provisionally selected.

(b) The present proposal is not for nation-wide operation. It is to cover areas of the four Metro cities only.

(c) At present car telephone is operated only in MTNL, Delhi. Number of car telephones working is 261. No further connections are planned for release during 1992-93.

Plan for development of Air India, Indian Airlines and I.T.D.C.

*120. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI :

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) what are the plans of Government to develop Air India, Indian Airlines and India Tourism Development Corporation to generate more profits; and